

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 EA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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R 100711Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7145
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USLO PEKING
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USINT HAVANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 5021

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG YO CU CH HK UR
SUBJ: CONVERSATION WITH TITO'S SECURITY ADVISOR MAKSIC

REF: A) BELGRADE 4738 B) BELGRADE 4758

1. ON JUNE 27 AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED YUGOSLAVIA'S RELATIONS WITH CHINA AND THE SOVIET UNION, AS WELL AS ITS ATTITUDE TOWARD CUBA IN THE NAM, WITH TITO'S NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR MILIVOJE MAKSIC. MAKSIC REPEATED THE FAMILIAR YUGOSLAV ASSERTION (REF A) THAT IMPROVING RELATIONS BETWEEN BELGRADE AND PEKING HAVE NOT ADVERSELY AFFECTED YUGOSLAVIA'S RELATIONS WITH MOSCOW. FURTHER, MAKSIC DOES NOT EXPECT THIS TO HAPPEN. HE DESCRIBED TITO'S RECENT TRIP TO PEKING AS THE "BIG TEST FOR US" SO FAR AS MOSCOW'S REACTION WAS CONCERNED. MOSCOW HAD BEEN VERY "FAIR" AT THAT TIME AND SINCE, POSSIBLY BECAUSE THE YUGOSLAVS HAD BEEN CAREFUL TO ENSURE THAT TITO'S PEKING JOURNEY WAS NOT USED AS AN OCCASION FOR THE CHICOMS TO TAKE POTSHOTS AT THE SOVIETS.

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2. THE AMBASSADOR ASKED MAKSIC FOR THE YUGOSLAV IMPRESSION OF THE INTERNAL SITUATION IN CHINA. MAKSIC SAID HE COULD DETECT NO CURRENT SIGNS OF INSTABILITY ON THE INTERNAL SCENE. THE YUGOSLAVS BELIEVE THE CURRENT CHINESE LEADERSHIP HAS MADE A BASIC DECISION TO NORMALIZE CHINA'S RELATIONS WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD, BECAUSE THEY SEE CLEARLY THAT CHINA CANNOT DEVELOP ITS

DOMESTIC ECONOMY IN ISOLATION FROM THE TECHNOLOGICALLY MORE DEVELOPED NATIONS. MAKSIC SPECULATED THAT WITH THIS EMPHASIS ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN CHINA, THE CHINESE LEADERSHIP MIGHT BE MORE INCLINED TO TAKE A "PEACEFUL COURSE" TOWARD STATES WITH WHICH IT NOW HAS POOR RELATIONS. IN ANY EVENT, MAKSIC WELCOMED CHINA'S INCREASING CONTACT WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD BECAUSE YUGOSLAVS BELIEVE THIS CAN ONLY LEAD TO A MORE STABLE AND MORE RATIONAL CHINA.

3. ASKED ABOUT THE PROSPECTS FOR THE JULY NAM FOREIGN MINISTERS CONFERENCE IN BELGRADE, AND FOR MAKSIC'S INTERPRETATION OF MINIC'S SPEECH TO THE 11TH LCY CONGRESS (REF B), MAKSIC REPLIED WITH A LAUGH THAT "MINIC WAS FINALLY ABLE TO GIVE THE SPEECH HE NEVER COULD AS FOREIGN MINISTER." ALTHOUGH HE ACKNOWLEDGED THE MINIC SPEECH AS A SIGNIFICANT EXPRESSION OF YUGOSLAVIA'S CONCERN OVER CUBAN AND OTHER RADICAL INFLUENCES WITH THE NAM, MAKSIC ALSO DESCRIBED THE CUBANS' BARK AS WORSE THAN THEIR BITE. YOU MUST KEEP AN EYE ON WHAT THEY DO IN BELGRADE, MAKSIC SAID, WHICH MAY NOT BE QUITE AS DIFFICULT TO DEAL WITH AS SOME OF THEIR STATEMENTS ELSEWHERE MAY LEAD YOU (AMERICANS) TO FEAR.

4. IN ANY EVENT, MAKSIC EMPHASIZED, IT IS CRUCIALLY IMPORTANT TO KEEP CUBA WITHIN THE NON ALIGNED MOVEMENT.
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AS A MAMEBER OF THE NAM, MAKSIC CONTENTED, THERE ARE LIMITS ON HOW FAR CUBA WILL FEEL IT CAN GO IN AFRICA. IT IS YUGOSLAVIA'S VIEW THAT WERE CUBA TO BE EXPELLED FROM THE NAM, IT WOULD BE DRIVEN INTO A MUCH CLOSER CLIENT RELATIONSHIP WITH THE SOVIET UNION. MAKSIC CONTENTED THAT CUBA IS NOT A SOVIET SATELLITE - "NOT SYNCHRONIZED BY THE SOVIETS LIKE BULGARIA."

5. COMMENT: WE HAVE FOUND MAKSIC TO TAKE CONSISTENTLY UPBEAT POSITIONS IN OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH HIM. WE FIND IT DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT THE SOVIETS ARE NOT BECOMING INCREASINGLY IRRITATED WITH YUGOSLAVIA, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF THE EVIDENT IMPROVEMENT IN BELGRADE-PEKING RELATIONS, BUT ALSO BECAUSE OF THE INCREASINGLY OUTSPOKEN ANTI-CUBAN POSITION THE YUGOSLAVS ARE TAKING AS THE NAM FOREIGN MINISTERS CONCERANCE APPROACHES.
EAGLEBURGER

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